

Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Project Profile CONNECTICUT

Updated: February 26, 2001

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program

Focus Areas Funded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratory – Biological Agents • Surveillance and Epidemiology • Health Alert Network
Connecticut has strengthened its capacity to respond to threats of bioterrorism by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forming the Bio-Response Action Team (for laboratory testing) made up of professional microbiologists who are being trained to respond to bioterrorist events, • Completing two training courses for local clinical laboratories “Bioterrorism and the Clinical Laboratory” and “The Role of the Clinical Laboratory in Surveillance and Reporting of Infectious Diseases”, • Developing a Bioterrorism Laboratory Procedure Manual for use in identifying, characterizing, and diagnosing certain infectious diseases, • Establishing the Health Alert Network (HAN) Advisory Committee which is charged with providing guidance and oversight to HAN activities within the state, • Developing the ability to distribute health alerts via faxes to all local health departments, • Conducting seven distance learning courses related to public health issues, including two specific to bioterrorism/public health emergency preparedness were provided to local health directors, clinicians, educators, hospital staff, and others, • Completing one CME-accredited training course for hospital clinicians “Preparing the Hospital Community for Bioterrorism” (at Hartford Hospital), • Continuing to promote the need for standards and evaluation measures for local public health practice, and the need for an infrastructure that can produce community-specific data to inform local health planning and action – this effort is resulting in the Local Health Standards Capacity Assessment which is scheduled to be conducted for all local health departments in 2001, and • Establishing Internet connectivity for local health agencies to improve electronic communications.
Project Year 2 Plans (August 31, 2000-August 30, 2001) include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding a fulltime microbiologist to their staff who will take the lead in establishing new technologies and training staff on new tests, particularly molecular diagnostics, this individual will also act as liaison to the state’s 30 hospitals to maintain awareness and provide consultation, • Providing new laboratory equipment to maintain level B laboratory capacity,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing capacities to conduct syndromic-specific event monitoring surveillance networks with hospitals, emergency departments, and other infectious disease specialists, • Maintaining a state-wide surveillance system for infectious diseases dissemination of information, • Completing the creation of a secure department of public health web site accessible to local health departments that will provide alerts, bulletins, reports, surveillance/epidemiological data and other communications, • Providing epidemiological, biostatistical, and informatics training to local health department staff, • Continuing to expand, enhance, and evaluate distance learning satellite networks statewide, • Developing a comprehensive state public health plan for biological and chemical terrorism that will be integrated into federal, state, and local plans, • Facilitating completion of the DOJ/CDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Assessment, • Completing an additional assessment of local health departments (Local Health Standards Capacity Assessment) to identify deficiencies based on the local health agencies ability to perform CDC's "10 Essential Public Health Services".
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Key Emergency Contacts	<table> <tr> <td><u>Federal Emergency Management Agency:</u></td> <td>(617) 223-9540</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>State Emergency Management Agency:</u></td> <td>(860) 566-4343</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>Federal Bureau of Investigation:</u></td> <td>(203) 777-6311</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>State Public Health Agency:</u></td> <td>(860) 509-8000</td> </tr> </table>	<u>Federal Emergency Management Agency:</u>	(617) 223-9540	<u>State Emergency Management Agency:</u>	(860) 566-4343	<u>Federal Bureau of Investigation:</u>	(203) 777-6311	<u>State Public Health Agency:</u>	(860) 509-8000
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Anecdotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Public Health maintains an internal electronic Laboratory Information Systems (LIMS) for tracking and reporting all laboratory specimens that come into the state public health labs. • During the Spring 2001 semester, Dr. Dembek is teaching the course “Public Health Response to Bioterrorism” at the University of Connecticut Health Center’s Masters in Public Health Program. 								